DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 203 941 JC 810 393

AUTHOR Pyne, Peg; Martin, John
TITLE Let Me Learn Too! Starting Continuing & Adult Education Programs for Men and Women with Developmental Disabilities [and] Consumer's Guide to Continuing and Adult Education.
INSTITUTION Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council, Boston.; North Shore Community Coll., Beverly, Mass.
PUB DATE Sep 80
NOTE 20p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Students; Course Content; Courses; *Developmental Disabilities; *Educational Opportunities; Financial Support; *Program Administration; Program Development; Publicity; Student Transportation; Two Year Colleges; *Two Year College Students

ABSTRACT

Information in these two booklets answers questions that administrators or potential students may have concerning adult education programs for persons with developmental disabilities. The first booklet, which is designed for administrators, answers 21 questions concerning the establishment, content, and promotion of these programs. The first nine questions and answers focus on existing programs across the country in terms of types of courses offered, fees, integration of students into regular courses, and course content. The remaining questions and answers look at administrative considerations relevant to establishing and marketing a program, staff selection, funding, scholarships, student transportation, and the special health needs of developmentally disabled students. The second booklet is designed as an informational aid for potential students. It first outlines learning opportunities that are generally available for developmentally disabled adults and answers questions students may have concerning the types of courses they may want to take; the times courses are available; sources of information concerning college courses; actions that can be taken if the student does not find the course in which he/she is interested; registration procedures; costs; course prerequisites; transportation and grading. The booklet concludes with a list of factors to be considered by the student in deciding whether or not to enroll in a course. (JP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED203941

LET ME LEARN TOO!

STARTING CONTINUING & ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR MEN AND WOMEN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Peg Pyne, *Director*
Project Access

A joint project of the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council and North Shore Community College, Division of Continuing Education and Community Services, Beverly, Massachusetts

September, 1980

3 Essex Street Beverly, MA 01915

NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

JC 810 393

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Margaret E. Pyne

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

RESOURCES

Baranyay, E. *A lifetime of learning: a survey of further education facilities for mentally handicapped adolescents and adults.* London: The National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children, 1976.

Cass, W. *Adult education: teaching methods and practices, administration and procedures.* New York: Noble and Noble, 1956.

Cross, K.P. and J.R. Valley. *Planning non-traditional programs: an analysis of the issues for postsecondary education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1974.

Dyssegaard, Birgit. *The role of special education in an overall rehabilitation program.* New York: World Rehabilitation Fund, Inc., 1980.

General Assembly. *Declaration of general and specific rights of the mentally retarded.* New York: United Nations, 1971.

Gross, R. *A handbook for the lifelong learner.* New York: Simon & Schuster/Touchstone, 1977.

Gruenwald, K., M.D. *The mentally retarded in Sweden.* Sweden: The Swedish Institute, 1974.

Hansen, G. and R.S. Peper. Life coping skill development through practical action. *Adult leadership,* 1976, 279.

Knowles, M.S. *The adult education movement in the United States.* New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1962.

Knowles, M.S. *The modern practice of adult education: androgogy versus pedagogy.* New York: Association Press, 1970.

Kreps, A.P., J. Black, et al. *Community living skills guides for the college for living* (series of curriculum guides for development of vocational,. academic and leisure skills). Denver: Metropolitan State College, 1975-1979.

Lord, C. A strategy for program development. *Adult leadership,* 1976, May, 292.

Matson J. and D. Bilovsky. The mentally retarded: a new challenge. *The Community and Junior College Journal,* 1974, *44,* 6, 16-18.

continued on back inside cover

LET ME LEARN, TOO! *is a guidebook. Its purpose is to help administrators expand and adapt adult education to meet the learning needs of developmentally disabled men and women. It includes an overview of adult education, program models, curriculum resources, funding ideas and practical steps to start a program in your community. The guidebook should be particularly useful to adult education and human service workers.*

Many adults considered to be developmentally disabled have missed out on integrated learning experiences during their formative years. Recent legislation supports individualized education in the least restrictive environment. It also supports mainstreaming for handicapped and non-handicapped students to learn together. This thrust is now beginning to impact upon the world of adult education.

A program manager can use this document as a tool to begin or expand adult education programs. It suggests new administrative relationships to be developed. It describes programs now in place throughout the country. It names professional and consumer organizations that can provide policy or curriculum support. However, the full development of adult education programs for developmentally disabled adults will not occur overnight. Such program expansion is not always easy or automatic — but it is vital to thousands of unserved or underserved adults, and an idea whose time has come.

The guidebook clearly has a Massachusetts focus. Yet the ideas can be adapted to help administrators in other states.

1. WHAT IS ADULT/CONTINUING EDUCATION?

Adult/Continuing Education is both educational offerings or courses, and the systems which provide them. It is both formal and informal. It is both privately and publicly sponsored. It is self-instructional or group oriented. It is vocational and avocational in content. It supports personal development.

2. WHO PROVIDES ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION?

Adult and continuing education is offered through many schools and programs:

four-year colleges and universities
community colleges
local high schools
community education centers
adult basic education skills centers
museums, music and art centers
churches and synagogues
fraternal organizations
clubs and societies
public and private libraries
technical and vocational schools
special education collaboratives
sheltered workshops
community residences/condominium organizations
YMCA/YWCA centers
television and radio stations
newspapers
correspondence course centers
individual crafts people
trade unions
stores
physical fitness and health centers
hospitals
community mental health centers
schools without walls
Literacy Volunteers of America
Right to Read Programs

3. **WHAT KINDS OF COURSES ARE OFFERED?**

Course offerings are so diverse that it would take several directories to adequately cover subjects which can be taken through adult education. A brief overview includes:

academic courses at basic, intermediate or advanced levels: language, math, science
adaptive or coping skills: income tax preparation, survival skills, ecology, budget for personal or corporate settings
occupational/vocational skills: carpentry, mechanics, metalwork, plumbing, engineering
professional skills: nursing arts, culinary science, TV and radio

avocational-leisure skills: sports and athletics, cooking, music,
art and dancing

4. IS ADULT EDUCATION FREE?

No, not usually. In most parts of the country adult education differs from elementary and secondary education because it is self-supporting. Students are charged fees and tuition —it is a "pay as you go" system. Costs vary according to school and course.

5. ARE THERE PLACES WHICH HAVE INCLUDED ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES?

Yes! Services for developmentally disabled adults are becoming more and more evident in community colleges and other adult education centers. A representative sample includes:

North Shore Community College, Beverly, MA 01915
Miami-Dade Community College, Miami, FLA 33100
College for Living, Denver/Boulder, COLO 80204
San Jose Community College, San Jose, CA 95100
Baltimore Community College, Baltimore, MD 21200
Community College of Allegheny County,
Pittsburgh, PA 15212
Johnson County Community Coll., Overland, KA 66204
Pontiac Continuing Education, Pontiac, MI 48053
State University of New York, Brockport, NY 14420

6. DO PEOPLE ENROLL IN REGULAR COLLEGE COURSES?

Some do. As with all students, the learning style and ability of the developmentally disabled students are matched to appropriate courses. Other students require modification of curriculum or special learning aides. Still others benefit most in courses designed especially for their learning level or interest.

Several students may participate actively in courses like self-defense, horticulture or community boating. Another student may perform well in a child care course but not be able to read the assigned text. Selection of a more easy-to-read text,

or tape-recording the written material may make the course accessible to the student with reading difficulties.

7. **WHAT COURSES ARE DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED MEN AND WOMEN?**

The following courses are randomly selected from hundreds now offered throughout the United States and Canada:

Reading for Safety and Leisure

Plants and Flowers
Science of the North Shore
Making the Community Work for You
Cooking for the Disabled on a Foodstamp Budget
Body Development
Sex Education
Civic Awareness
Independent Living Skills
You and the Law
Relaxation by Yoga
Money and Banking
Sewing
Introduction to Indoor and Outdoor Gardening
Coping with Personal Needs
Slimnastics
Fishing
Family Living
Independent Travel Training
Looking Good! (Nutrition)
Typing for Enjoyment
Music: Making and Listening
Personal Hygiene
Communication Skills
Practical Living Skills
Basic Skills Development
Creative Arts
Small Engine Repair
Home Safety and Energy Conservation
Friendship and Loss
My Legal Rights

8. AREN'T SEPARATE OR TARGETED COURSES AGAINST "NORMALIZATION" OR MAINSTREAMING?

When possible, it is always desirable to have students participate in "regular" courses. However, some students, especially those new to adult education, may feel overwhelmed in courses geared to the average learning rate. These students tend to show greater success in courses designed to meet their particular learning patterns and interests. After successfully completing one or two targeted courses, students often gain the confidence required to participate in "regular" courses. Student success and satisfaction should be the most important factor. A successful student will go on to explore more learning opportunities. A person who has failed may not. What's important in the "regular" versus "special" argument is that open enrollment is invited — that non-developmentally disabled students may enroll in specialized courses if they choose, and that developmentally disabled students be invited to participate in more general courses throughout the school when appropriate.

9. HOW ARE PROGRAMS STRUCTURED WHEN DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED ADULTS?

Three basic models are easily identified.

1. Basic Skill Development - students participate in reading or math courses to attain basic competency

2. Personal Development - students select individual courses for leisure, enjoyment or enrichment

3. Vocational Development - students take academic and trade training to move toward a specific job

Many programs appear to offer courses during the evenings or on weekends. Community Colleges in Hawaii and Alberta, Canada, however, offer a five-day-per-week program for one year. Almost like an "Associate Degree", students are expected to acquire levels of proficiency required for

baseline employment.

Continuing Education courses tend to follow patterns similar to other continuing education courses in a particular system:

1, 1½ or 2 hour classes
6, 8 or 15 week semesters

Most programs require ten students to hold a class at no fiscal loss. Because a ratio of 1:10 may limit the learning potential for the student, several programs have an instructional assistant in the classroom. This person is recompensed in several ways. Instead of paying cash, one school offers the assistant a voucher for a free continuing education course. A second school seeks community volunteers and gets retired Air Force officers and off-hour professionals. A third model reaches within the school and uses teachers-in-training, who use their teaching as a practicum experience for credit.

10. WHAT COURSE OR COURSES DOES AN ADMINISTRATOR BEGIN WITH?

A look at programs across the country indicates that most programs offer a basic money or reading course. Next comes cooking or independent living skills. Then programs branch out to a variety of alternatives.

One good way to begin is to do a survey of potential students. By soliciting information directly from students, you explore what people want to learn and simultaneously introduce them to the opportunities of adult education.

11. ONCE YOU DETERMINE WHAT COURSES TO OFFER, WHAT CURRICULUM RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

Several very helpful resources are available:

Handicapped Learner Materials Distribution Center
University of Indiana
Bloomington, IN 47401

Project Independence
P.O. Box 47
Watertown, MA 02172

College for Living Community Skills Guides
Metro College for Living
Denver, CO 80204

Curriculum Modules from CLEAR
(Continued Learning Experiences)
Johnson County Community College
Overland Park, KS 66204

It is important to remember that there is no "perfect" curriculum. Like any class, materials, texts and other resources are tools which must be adapted to the learning style and level of the group with whom the instructor is working. Many special educators are unfamiliar with materials available from other professional "guilds" which may be useful:

1. Adult Basic Education Centers have a wealth of low reading/ high interest level materials; many of these address daily living skills — budgeting, job applications, daily news.

2. "Educational Therapy" has been a part of the rehabilitation world for many years. Professionals and volunteers in this field tend to work with people who have become brain injured as a result of illness or accident. Many of their tools and techniques will be helpful in reaching the difficult-to-learn student.

12. WHERE DOES AN ADMINISTRATOR BEGIN?

One of the easiest ways to begin is to meet with some folks who might be potential students, representatives of the local association for retarded citizens (seek them out in the Yellow Pages or call the Massachusetts central office: M.A.R.C., 217 South Street, Waltham, MA 02154, 891-6270), staff directors or group home managers from local programs, and the Area and Regional Office of the Department of Mental Health. An initial meeting can reveal if there is a need for such programs in your geographic area. Representatives of these groups can also form an important advisory function throughout the year. They can help plan future courses, assist in staff recruitment and selection, and assist in "getting the word out" to potential students.

13. HOW DOES ONE "MARKET" TO THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE?

To be honest, marketing is an ongoing challenge. The concept of "going to college" is new to people. Others have had unhappy earlier learning experiences and may be hesitant to try again. Newspaper articles provide a way to "introduce" the program to a new area, and can highlight the enjoyment of learning, as well as give practical information about course offerings, tuition, and other programmable details.

Other good outreach practices include:

Public speaking EVERYWHERE (Associations for Retarded Citizens, Consumer advocacy Meetings, Lions Club, Rotary, Sheltered Workshops, Mental Health and Retardation Offices, Cerebral Palsy Society — talk to anyone who will listen!)

Publish "blurbs" all over the place frequently. Consider:

local newspapers (daily and weekly)
association newsletters
church bulletins
mental health and retardation newsletters
handicap and advocacy newsletters

Work with local audio-visual centers:

T.V.
radio

Leave fliers or put up posters at:

doctors' offices
employment offices
community service agencies
professional and consumer association offices
grocery store bulletin boards
chamber of commerce
schools and colleges
churches and synagogues
hospitals
libraries
24-hour stores
public transportation sites (on buses or at bus stations)
banks

Don't forget your own internal communication tools:

- college catalog
- beginning-of-the-semester announcements to instructors
- alumnae newsletter
- undergraduate newspaper
- annual report
- special brochure about the program

Continue to keep publicity/public education in the limelight. It expands people's knowledge of the program and serves as ongoing outreach to new students. Remind students to tell their friends!

14. WHO SHOULD TEACH?

Staff selection is done differently across the country. As mentioned earlier, some programs run from a voluntary base using either community volunteers or teachers-in-training. Others hire instructors just as they would for any continuing education vacancy. Some instructors have extensive experience in working with people who have a hard time learning, while others have no such experience. The North Shore Community College program has used special and regular education instructors. If a person is hired who has no formal background in special education, strong effort is made to select an instructional assistant who does have experience in the field. One obviously doesn't need a special education degree to effectively teach Yoga, but it is important to select a skilled person to teach reading or math.

One "bottom line" that North Shore Community College has been committed to is NOT to hire instructors who work with students in other daily situations (sheltered workshop or community residence staff). There is a sense that part of the positive feeling about "coming to college" is having a new experience with new people. It seems to detract from the dignity of the experience if a student enrolls in a course and find that the teacher he or she had in high school, or the group home manager is the person at the front of the room.

If people without special education or rehabilitation experience are selected, there must be an opportunity for the program coordinator and that faculty person to meet. A supervisory relationship strengthens the classroom activity.

15. WHAT'S THE "BOTTOM LINE" FOR MONEY? WHAT DOES THIS COST THE SCHOOL?

Programs across the country are funded in different ways. Some have extensive funding from federal, state or local grants, or from private foundations. Others operate without additional funds, using internal resources to set up one or two courses as they would any new curriculum offering. Programs across the country report increased student enrollment over a five year period. Most schools carry no extra financial burden for such courses. Just as with any course, if enough students fail to enroll the course is not held. If more than the required number of students enroll, a second section is scheduled. Students pay their own way through personal funds. However, most schools recognize that many people with handicaps or disabilities are on a fixed income. Courses tend to be pro-rated to consider a person's income level.

16. WHAT ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS?

Great! Use them, or make them. Many schools have scholarship and loan offices. These offices are often willing to extend their services to learners with special needs. Other local groups can be asked to help establish a special scholarship fund to support developmentally disabled people: Lions Club, Rotary Club, Knights of Pythias, Knights of Columbus and others. Basic Educational Opportunity Grants may be helpful to some students pursuing at least 6 academic credits. Their fiscal need and program requirements can be evaluated through the school's fiscal office. Other human service agency funds may provide fiscal support for a student:

Mass. Rehabilitation Commission can assist, within certain regulations, if the education/training is job-related

C.E.T.A. often funds continuing education for job-related courses.

Dept. of Mental Health/Div. of Mental Retardation individual contract money or overage funds may support an adult's educational program if "adult education" is written into that person's habilitation or service plan.

(Potential students can check with agencies to see what eligibility requirements exist.)

17. ARE THERE OTHER CONCERNS WHICH THE STUDENT MUST FACE?

Yes, transportation can be a BIG problem. The college doesn't typically provide transportation for other students, so it is not apt to become a transportation provider for disabled or handicapped people. However, program coordinators, Dean's staff and others are probably willing to share some ideas about transportation — car pooling with other students, using handicapped/elderly transportation if it exists, alerting the student to public transportation systems.

18. ARE THERE OTHER CONCERNS WHICH THE SCHOOL MUST FACE?

The North Shore Community College experience has been positive. The program continues to grow. One challenge has been getting students to enroll on time. People can't think about signing up for a course in September if registration was held in August. Also, there are certain "human rights" issues which impact on any agency which serves people under the direct aegis of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health. Deans and other program staff should be aware of human rights regulations and local human rights committees established through the Department of Mental Health. A Handbook on Human Rights is available free of charge from the Division of Mental Retardation, 160 North Washington Street, Boston, MA 02114 (Attention: Linda Glenn, Assistant Commissioner). These regulations impact especially on client/student photographs, names in newspapers or other public documents, physical and programmatic accessibility. A process is clearly outlined to obtain informed consent of the student or student's guardian for media releases.

19. IF A SCHOOL OR COLLEGE DOES SEEK OUTSIDE FUNDS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM DESIGN, WHAT LEGISLATION MIGHT SUPPORT SUCH ACTIVITY?

Discretionary funds are available through grant and contract processes from both the federal and state governments. An administrator can seek funds through the following laws:

Elementary and Secondary School Act
Higher Education Act
Education for All Handicapped Children Act
Rehabilitation and Developmental Disabilities, Amendments of 1973
Comprehensive Employment and Training Act
Social Security Amendments

The Massachusetts Departments of Education, Mental Health, Rehabilitation Commission, Manpower/Employment Security, and Developmental Disabilities Council can be of assistance. The State House Bookstore offers good resources for Massachusetts funding sources, as does the John F. Kennedy Federal Building Government Bookstore for federal fund information.

Private foundation sources can be identified through the Massachusetts Private Foundation Office, 294 Washington Street, Boston.

20. WHAT ABOUT ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS?

Unfortunately not every room of every school or college is accessible to people with physical disabilities. Administrators can arrange classroom space, or reschedule if necessary, once they know a person with special needs is enrolled in a class. Students should be invited to call beforehand to check on accessibility of classroom and restroom facilities. While new schools are constructed with accessibility in mind, modifications and adaptations of older facilities are necessary. The administrator and student should work cooperatively to promote easy access.

21. WHAT ABOUT OTHER HEALTH NEEDS?

All students have special needs, unique to them. Some folks might have motor problems; others might have vision or

hearing loss; still others might have epilepsy. Many schools request students to complete health cards at the time of enrollment. If a health problem is particularly significant, students should be invited to speak to the instructor at the first class about special considerations. Special health considerations should be attended to insofar as they affect learning or classroom behavior. They should not be used as a reason to exclude a student from the learning environment. Many health considerations are well-managed by the student and may not even appear during a semester of learning.

Mittler, P.J. and S.G. Gittins, eds. *Report of a joint conference: the educational needs of mentally handicapped adults.* Manchester, England: The National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children, 1974.

President's Committee on Mental Retardation. Mental retardation: the known and the unknown. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976.

Pyne, P. and J. Martin. "Consumer's guide to continuing and adult education." Beverly, MA: North Shore Community College, 1980.

Schneider, G. Small program design and implementation. *Adult Leadership*, 1976, February, 197.

Schulman, Evaline. *Focus on the retarded adult: programs and services.* St. Louis, Missouri: C.V. Mosby Co., 1979.

Seltzer, M. and G. Seltzer. *Context for competence.* Cambridge, MA: Educational Projects, Inc., 1978.

Shaw, N., ed. *Administration of continuing education: a guide for administrators.* Washington, D.C.: National Association for Public School Adult Education, 1969.

Stark, J.A., ed. Community services forum: promoting opportunities for people with significant handicaps. P.O. Box 8121, Omaha, Nebraska 68101.

CONSUMER'S GUIDE to CONTINUING and ADULT EDUCATION

A joint project of
North Shore Community College and
Mass. Developmental Disabilities Council

a work of PEG PYNE and JOHN MARTIN

NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
3 Essex Street Beverly, MA 01915

INTRODUCTION

If you are an adult with special learning needs and you want to find out about places to learn new skills, then this GUIDE is for you. The GUIDE gives a lot of general information about different kinds of *adult education* — education that can also be called *continuing education, lifelong learning* or *community education.* After reading through the GUIDE, begin to look for schools and programs in your neighborhood where you can sign up for a course.

LEARNING

We learn new things all through our lives — all the time. Our age or ability doesn't matter. Getting excited about learning is what counts. Having fun! Enjoying it! The things we learn are often new skills we want or need to know. A *skill* is learning to do something with your hands, or body or mind. When you "learn" you can also *improve* (learn to do better) *skills* you already have. And there are lots of things we learn just to have fun.

The city or town you live in has many exciting programs where people can learn. Most communities offer Adult and Continuing Education programs. Each has many kinds of courses. Just a few kinds of courses are:

reading	jogging
plants and flowers	disco and other dancing
math and money skills	typewriting
	woods and wildlife
woodworking	eating well
writing	making and keeping friends
transportation	

This booklet is a GUIDE to help you find a course, or several courses that may interest you.

ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

We all have things we need to know or would like to learn. Learning never stops. This is why we have Adult and Continuing Education courses and programs. Education is for all of us — children, adolescents, young adults, folks in their middle years and older people.

Adult Education can help you learn new skills and it can help you get a high school diploma. You have to decide if you want to get involved in many courses, or just take something for fun. Some people like to study things they've never known about before. Other people "want to break" and want to learn things that are interesting, that may become a hobby, something to do in their spare time. Some people want to learn things that can help them at work.

Some place to go for Adult Education are:

Community Colleges
Basic Educational Skill Centers
Vocational Schools
High School
Private Schools & Institutes
Classes run by Group Homes
Sheltered Workshops
Museums
Business and Industry
Community Education Centers
Clubs and organizations
Churches and Temples

What's In It For Me?

Learning really helps you work better and enjoy your free time. You can do your job better if you can read and write. You can shop for food better, and save money, if you understand how to use money. Learning how to use the newspaper can help you know what's happening in town, at the movies, or what's exciting on the Sport's Page, and where to get a new job.

When you take a course you also get to meet new people. You often make new friends who like to do the same things you like to do.

Some folks like to take courses because they get (sometimes) a *certificate of completion),* a piece of paper to hang in their room or put in a scrap book that says he or she has successfully finished a course. Other folks get a *diploma,* a piece of paper that says they have finished many courses. Sometimes these certificates help you get a new job because they show that now you can do something that you couldn't do before.

WHAT SHOULD I LEARN? WHAT COURSE SHOULD I TAKE?

Here are some questions you can ask yourself. They should help you realize what interests you; what you do well; what things may be hard for you. Often you can learn to do things, even things that once were hard, if you pick the right course, take your time and practice.

Are there skills I already have that I want to improve?

There might be some things that you do now that you'd like to do better: reading, cooking, sports. One woman enjoyed reading but she did it very slowly. She found a course in "Improving Your Reading Skills" at a nearby Community College and her reading is getting faster all the time. Another person was getting tired of eating the same old foods — T.V. Dinners and cold sandwiches. A local Vocational-Technical School was offering a course, "Foods from Other Countries". He's now cooking Italian Spaghetti and French Bread!

Are there new skills I want to learn?

Two friends decided they had to do something about their weight problems. They were putting on too many pounds. One person decided to take a "Weight Watcher's" course and the other person took an excercise course. A couple of different ways to solve a problem!

Still another friend needed to learn to do more things by himself. He was moving into a new apartment. He needed to learn to use public transportation in a new part of town. He needed help to get a job. He needed to learn how to take care of his new home. A course in "Community Living Skills" taught him what he needed to know.

What can I do in my free time, my spare time?

Many people now like to do something athletic — running, playing tennis, dancing or swimming. The local YMCA and YWCA often teach basic courses in all these areas, and more. Local Horticultural Societies teach how to grow a better outside garden, and how to grow indoor plants. Sometimes the Red Cross or Fire and Police Departments teach First Aid courses — what to do in an emergency if someone gets hurt. The local library probably teaches courses about mystery stories or reading. Historical Societies are clubs you can join that teach about the people who lived in your area many years ago. Are you interested in music? Many stores which sell instruments, like pianos or organs, give free lessons if you buy an instrument from them.

When can I take a course?

It depends on where you go to take a course. Some courses are held in the morning, others in the afternoon and many are held at night or on weekends. Write down when you work, and when you have things you have to do. Then see what time is left over. See if a school or college in your area has courses when you have free time.

Should I go alone?

Sure. If you can get to and from the school, can pay for the course and want to go alone, that's fine! But many people like to go with a friend, or a realtive, or a neighbor. But when you are at school, don't be surprised if you meet new friends. On the first night (or day) of class the teacher/instructor usually asks everyone to say his or her name. Often there is a break for five or ten minutes when you can get a cup of coffee or cold drink. That's a good time to talk with new people.

How Do I Find Out What Programs or Courses Are Available?

1. Check your mail. Many schools send free catalogs (list of courses) they will soon offer.
2. Check the local newspaper — many courses are listed in special sections on Education, or in advertisements.
3. Telephone the schools or centers close to you and ask that they send you a catalog. If you ask "to be put on the mailing list", they should send you a catalog each semester. (A semester is a time period of several months when new courses are held. Usually schools have a Fall Semester, a Winter or Spring Semester and a Summer Semester.)
4. Many schools have free catalogs in their lobby for people to pick up. In cities, catalogs are often found in supermarkets, libraries and other places where many people are likely to see them, and take one.
5. You may ask friends, relatives, people you work with about courses; try asking a citizen advocate, house manager, or other people who know a lot about your community.
6. Check to see what town or cities close by have for adult education, too. If the course you want isn't available in your exact town, maybe you will find it not very far away.

What If I Can't Find the Couse I Want To Take?

Talk to the person in charge of the school or program. Maybe the course you want will be offered next semester. If the course is unusual and only you are interested, the school probably can't offer it. But you can try to get your friends interested in the same course and then tell the school director that there are enough people to have the class. Usually a school needs ten or more people to run a class. In the meantime, check to see if the course you want is offered in other schools close by.

How Do I Sign Up For a Course?

"Signing up" for a course has two other names. Some schools call it *registration*; other schools call it enrolling. Before you go to register, read the catalog. Catalogs have important directions about registering. The catalog tells you:

1. how much the course costs
2. the exact times of registration
3. whether you can pay by cash, money order, check or credit card
4. if there are other costs (late fees, laboratory fees)
5. if you need to have your social security number
6. when the course will start and end
7. whether you must register in person at the school or if you can register by mail
8. other information: telephone number, person to call in case of an accident or if school is cancelled

People who work at the school and help at registration are usually willing to help students fill out forms. The most important thing, though, is for you to register ON TIME. If you wait until the last minute, the class might be "filled" (too many people in the class to let one more person in) or it might be cancelled (too few people signed up).

Are Courses Expensive?

It depends where you go. Some courses cost a lot of money. Some courses are free. Some cost just a little amount of money. Most adult and continuing education courses are not expensive. If you don't have enough money, ask if there is a *scholarship* or *loan* office. These are offices which help students pay for courses.

Do I Need to Have a Certain Level of Education to Take a Course? Can I Be Refused Admission to a Course?

Different courses have different rules for taking them. These are called entrance requirements. For some courses you have to have an eighth grade diploma, or a high school diploma, or you have to have taken another course first to be able to do well in the course you want to take. But many courses have no requirements. You just need to be interested in what you are going learn. Check with the people at registration, or in the catalog, or with the person who will be teaching the course to find out about entrance requirements. Counseling offices at the school can also help you find the right course for you. You can't be refused to the school because of the country you are from, what you believe or what your race is, but you can be refused because of your educational level or ability.

If the Course I Want is Cancelled, What Does That Mean?

A cancelled course will not be held. The school lets you know by phone or by a letter, or by putting a sign on the classroom door. Ask someone at the school office if the course will be held held again. If you have already paid for your course, you will get your money back, or the school will ask you to pick another course you would like to take.

Is There Usually Transportation to Adult Education Programs?

No. Transportation is your responsibility. Maybe someone you live with or close by is going to take a course. You can share a ride. Check to see if there is public transportation that can take you to your school. Put a sign on the bulletin board at the supermarket or library to see if there is someone who could give you a ride.

Can People in Wheelchairs Take Courses?

Many schools are accessible for wheelchairs. The easiest way to find out is to call the school and ask. Sometimes the school's catalog will tell you if the program is accessible.

Do You Have To Be a Certain Age to Take a Course?

Most courses are for anyone who isn't in high school, age 16 and above. Again, you can call the school to find out if there is a rule about age.

Can I "Flunk" or Fail an Adult Education Course?

Yes, but most people don't. Usually, if you are careful to pick a course that meets your needs and interests, you'll do really well. If you are having a hard time learning, tell the teacher/instructor. Sometimes he or she can help you. Also, there are *remedial* or *tutorial* programs you can go for extra help. People are there to help you learn more easily. You have to do this during extra time.

Will I Get a Mark?

It depends upon the policy of the school and the teacher. Sometimes you get a letter grade: A = Excellent, B = Good, C = Fair, D = Poor. Sometimes you get Pass or Fail. Sometimes you get number grades: 100% = Excellent, 80% means good, 70% means fair, 60% or below means poor or failing.

Do I Want To Take A Course?

This is the most important question of all, and only you can answer it. You have to think about many things:

1. Do I want to learn something new, or learn to do something better that I already know how to do a little bit?
2. Do I have enough money to pay for the course?
3. Do I get home from work in time to take a course and can I get to school in time for the start of class?
4. Do I have a way to get to school and get home again?
5. Am I free the night or day the course I want to take is offered?
6. Am I willing to go alone if I can't get a friend to go?
7. Do I have enough time to register for the course by mail or by going to the school?

There are many courses you can take. There are probably a lot more courses than you can imagine. A lot is happening in your neighborhood right now! It is up to you to find a course you want to take.

Hopefully the suggestions in this book will make your choosing, finding and taking a course easy. It really isn't hard. In fact, you should have a lot of fun finding your course.

Enjoy!

AUG 7 1981
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES